

# To Stand Upright Is Human...

*to Walk Is Divine*

We wouldn't exist if our ancestors had not taken those first steps to get food, water, and out of the cold. If they wanted anything they had to get up and put their feet in motion. When they no longer had to wander searching for food they had to walk through fields to tend crops. When the area became overrun with "neighbors" they took to their feet to find new land.

Humanity's stories are filled with walking – the trek to the promised land was on foot – no chartered buses! Monks and priests of many sects wander across mountains and deserts silently to acquire enlightenment. Pilgrimages are made on foot to show devotion and give value to the journey – and time to contemplate the importance of the act. Tales and mythologies often involve ancestors walking from some unknown place into our lives.

Even when there are animals, carts, and machines to carry us, walking defines the journey as special. When grandparents and great-grandparents pull out the "I walked 10 miles (through the ever-present snow) to school," that's what they are saying – it

wasn't easy, but it was important to get there. When we walk we can recapture the spirit of the act. We can discover in the steady pace of our gait that our mind is free to wander or, if we choose, to focus on a single idea or concept.

Passing a familiar place on foot, rather than in a speeding car, will yield more details

– perhaps a small garden rich with beautiful smells or a building with architectural elements you've never noticed. And when you set out on foot you become part of the community – if only to smile and say hello as you pass.

You can have these benefits

any time. Even a short walk will refresh your mind and body as you use the time for anything you like – pondering an upcoming

event, preparing your thoughts for a project, reflecting on your hopes and dreams, visiting, or just relaxing. So take a few minutes today to get in touch with the past, your surroundings, and yourself by enjoying a walk.



*"Do not look back in anger, or forward in fear, but around in awareness."*

*– James Thurber*